

## NEW YORK HERALD.

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## AMUSEMENTS THIS EVENING.

HIBLO'S GARDEN, Broadway.—English Opera.—Box Office.

WINTER GARDEN, Broadway, opposite Bond street.—Opera.

BOWERY THEATRE, Bowery.—A Night in London.

WALLACE'S THEATRE, Broadway.—Central Park.

LAURA KENNE'S THEATRE, No. 624 Broadway.—Savoy Opera.

NEW BOWERY THEATRE, Bowery.—Who Speaks First.—Hallequin Jack.—Carpenter of Rouen.

THEATRE FRANCAIS, No. 55 Broadway.—Les Cinq Tiers de la Seine.

BARNUM'S AMERICAN MUSEUM, Broadway.—Day and Evening.—The Woman in White.—Laying Out.

BRYANT'S MINSTRELS, Mechanics' Hall, 472 Broadway.—Buller's Song, Dances, &amp;c.—Jack Cade.

BOOLEY &amp; CAMPBELL'S MINSTRELS, Hiblo's Saloon, Broadway.—Ethiopian Songs, Dances, &amp;c.—The Minstrels.

CANTERBURY MUSIC HALL, 623 Broadway.—Tight Loos, Songs, Dances, &amp;c.—The Minstrels.

MELODEON, No. 539 Broadway.—Songs, Dances, &amp;c.—The Minstrels.

New York, Thursday, February 21, 1861.

## MAILS FOR THE PACIFIC.

New York Herald—California Edition.

The mail steamer North Star, Capt. Jones, will leave this port to-day, at noon, for Aspinwall.

The mail steamer California, and other parts of the Pacific will leave at 10 o'clock this morning.

The New York Weekly Herald—California Edition—containing the latest intelligence from all parts of the world, with a large quantity of local and miscellaneous matter, will be published at half-past eight o'clock in the morning.

Single copies in wrappers, ready for mailing, six cents. Agents will please send in their orders as early as possible.

## The News.

Mr. Lincoln yesterday received his fellow citizens at the City Hall. Mayor Wood delivered an address of welcome on the occasion to which Mr. Lincoln responded. In the evening Mr. Lincoln attended the Opera, and at midnight he was serenaded. Mr. Hamlin, the Vice President elect, arrived in town yesterday, and stopped at the Astor House. The movements of these distinguished personages are described in another part of to-day's paper.

Reports to the effect that the South Carolinians were about to or had already attacked Fort Sumter yesterday. They were doubtless mere idle rumors, devoid of foundation in truth.

The Peace Congress yesterday voted down the proposition in favor of half hour speeches. The debate on the various plans of adjustment was then continued. It is thought that the Congress will vote on the subjects before them on Saturday, and it is predicted that the Guthrie plan will be rejected, and that a call for a national convention will be agreed to.

In Congress yesterday the Senate passed several private bills. The House bill authorizing the discontinuance of the mails in States where the postal service is liable to be interfered with, was taken up. An amendment was offered, that the Postmaster General be directed to discontinue the mail service in the seceded States, and make arrangements with the government of the Southern Confederacy for inter-postal communication therein. Without taking action on the subject the bill was laid aside, and the discussion of the Tariff bill was resumed. The amendment reducing the duty on sugar, and placing a duty on tea and coffee, was agreed to, the tax to continue for two years. A five per cent duty on wool was also agreed to. Several other amendments were adopted, and the bill was passed by a vote of 25 to 14.

In the House yesterday Mr. Bocoek, of Virginia, occupied the morning hour in an elaborate speech in opposition to the bill empowering the President to call out the military forces of the country and accept the services of volunteers. He characterized the bill as a declaration of war against the seceded States. The Naval bill was taken up, the question being on agreeing to the Senate's amendment providing for the construction of seven steam sloop-of-war. The proposition was warmly opposed by the democrats, but the amendment was agreed to by a vote of 111 to 38. In the evening session Mr. Ruffin, of North Carolina, made a speech in favor of secession. In the course of his remarks he spoke of Mr. Buchanan as a driveller, and Gen. Scott as guilty of usurpation.

Late accounts from Fort Smith, Arkansas, state that the overland mail had been seized by Texans, and the employees of the company imprisoned. It is also reported that Fort Chadbourne and Belknap have been seized by the secessionists.

Nothing of importance occurred in the Legislature yesterday.

By way of New Orleans we have advices from Havana to the 16th inst. The sugar market was easier, with a stock of sixty thousand boxes. A grand military review had been given by the Captain General in honor of ex-President Miramon, of Mexico.

Early yesterday morning the premises Nos. 29 and 31 Park place, occupied by Wm. Watson & Co., importers of linen goods, and Chapman, Lyon & Noyes, importers of fancy goods, were discovered on fire, and before the flames could be extinguished about \$80,000 worth of property was destroyed. The loss is covered by insurance.

A meeting of importers, distillers and liquor dealers was called at Thorp's Hotel, in Union square, last evening, for the purpose of making efforts to repeal the present excise law, and to try and secure the passage of a good liquor law by the present Legislature; but they were unable to organize and had to adjourn until next Tuesday evening.

At the meeting of the Commissioners of Emigration yesterday it was agreed to hold a special meeting on Friday next, at eleven o'clock A. M., for the purpose of receiving and acting upon the annual report. The weekly statement showed the number of emigrants arrived during the past week to be 483, which makes the number since January 1, 476. The balance of the commutation fund to the credit of the Board is now \$3,627 82.

In our personal notices of the President party yesterday we stated that Messrs. W. S. Wood and Burnett Forbes belonged to Springfield. It should have been, as we are informed, New York, as those two gentlemen were specially sent from this city to take charge of the President and cortege during the route.

In the Board of Education last evening a communication was received from the School Officers of the Twentieth ward, asking an appropriation of \$34,069 for the erection of a new schoolhouse; and another from the School Officers of the Fifteenth ward, asking for \$16,134 to alter and enlarge Ward Schoolhouse No. 35. Both were referred to the Committee on Sites and Schoolhouses. An application from the Committee on Free Academy for authority to advertise for proposals and specifications for the erection of a library building near the Free Academy, in connection with that building, was made the special order for the next meeting. A resolution was passed directing Washington's

Farwell Address to be read in all the schools of the city on the approaching anniversary of the great hero's birthday, and authorizing the teachers to dismiss early. The Board then adjourned.

The third trial of James Shepherd, for arson in the first degree, was commenced yesterday in the General Sessions, the alleged crime having been committed in June, 1857. John Wilson, who was convicted of forgery in the second degree, was sent to the State Prison for five years and two months.

The court martial on Lieutenant Barbot, at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, was continued yesterday, when Master's Mate Humphreys, and Paymaster's Clerk Hoadley, were examined for the defence, after which the court adjourned to half-past ten o'clock this morning.

Beef cattle were yesterday in plentiful supply and moderate request at a slight depreciation, especially the better grades, of which there was a larger proportion than usual. Milch cows were quiet. Veal calves were in moderate demand, and previous prices were barely supported. Sheep and lambs were in request at prices ranging from \$2 75 to \$4, including all kinds. Swine were in moderate request, but a little lower. The total receipts were 3,765 beef cattle, 98 cows, 470 veals, 8,123 sheep and lambs, and 7,616 swine.

The cotton market exhibited more animation and activity yesterday. The sales embraced about 3,000 bales, closing on the basis of 11½c. a 11½c. for middling uplands, chiefly at the latter figure, at which 700 bales were sold from store. Few estimates of the crop exceed four millions of bales, while some do not reach that amount. The decrease in the receipts at the ports, compared with last year, was 687,000 bales; in exports to Great Britain, 79,000; to France, 36,000, and to other foreign ports 15,000, making a total decrease of 130,000 bales. Four was less active, while sales were moderate, including some purchases for export. The market closed without change of moment in prices. Wheat was firmly held at the previous day's prices, while sales were moderate. Corn was steady at unchanged prices, while sales were fair. Pork was quiet, and more nominal at \$17 a \$17 25 asked, and prime was quiet at \$13. Other provisions were without change of importance. Sugars were steady, with sales of 1,060 hds. Cuban and 500 boxes Havanas at prices given in another column. Coffee was dull and sales limited. The firmness of freights checked engagements. Moderate shipments were made to English ports, mostly at the current rates of the previous day.

## The President Elect—His Speeches, His Cabinet, and His Inauguration.

The presence in this city of the President elect of the United States has given, during the last two days, an extraordinary activity to the discussion of political affairs among all parties and classes of our people. Abraham Lincoln is the newest wonder of the town; the lion of the day; the coming man, soon to be invested with the office and the responsibilities from which Mr. Buchanan will be only too happy to be delivered; and it is not surprising, therefore, that all eyes, all ears, and all hopes of all men from all quarters for the Union and against the Union, for peace or for war, and for spoils and plunder, should be turned to this modest backwoodsman, Lincoln.

In behalf of the Union—after noting the improved tone in the little conventional speeches of this distinguished stranger from Buffalo to this city—we do not despair of still better things to come. It is apparent to us that Mr. Lincoln is beginning to feel and to appreciate the pressure of the conservative peace and Union sentiment of the North. We incline to the opinion that the ice has been broken; that his mind is already retreating under the shackles of the Chicago platform; and that, by the time he reaches Washington, he will comprehend pretty largely the fearful disorders of the country, the responsibilities of his position, and the dangers which are threatened from a rigid, headlong and violent "enforcement of the laws" against our revolutionary Southern brethren.

In the meantime, we must not forget that the President elect has been so much absorbed and embarrassed in the work of picking out his Cabinet that he has had no time for oratorical exhibitions. We understand that at every stopping place over night since his departure from Springfield he has devoted a considerable portion of his time to the important subject of his Cabinet, and unless he be compelled to change his Cabinet programme, as his predecessors have done before him, by the pressure of circumstances, he has so far progressed in the task as to justify the proclamation of the following schedule:—

Secretary of State.....W. H. Seward, N. Y.  
Secretary of the Treasury.....Simon P. Chase, N. Y.  
Secretary of the Interior.....Montgomery Blair, Md.  
Secretary of War.....Simon Cameron, Pa.  
Attorney General.....Edward Bates, Mo.

From which it would appear that the Post Office Department and the Navy Department are the only Cabinet positions remaining to be filled. For these places the contest is said to lie between Charles Francis Adams and George Ashmun, of Massachusetts, and Caleb B. Smith and Schuyler Colfax, of Indiana. At all events, with such republican conservatives as Seward and Cameron, to say nothing of the venerable Mr. Bates, we can discover even in the Cabinet selections of Mr. Lincoln a strong desire on his part to put the brakes upon Northern abolition fanaticism.

It is said that Mr. Lincoln, after his arrival in Washington, will first finish the work of his Cabinet, and will then proceed to touch up "the shifting scenes" of this revolutionary crisis. Thus, in his inaugural, referring to that of his distinguished Southern Presidential rival, Jefferson Davis, it is supposed that President Lincoln will urge the plea of Mr. Seward touching the seceded States—the plea of masterly inactivity in the matter of compromises of any sort. Next, it is conjectured that Mr. Lincoln, touching upon the profitless labors of the Old Gentlemen's Peace Conference at Washington, will settle down upon a recommendation for a National Convention of all the States for the purpose of taking into consideration the reconstruction of the Union in the revision of the federal constitution.

We think, however, that this expedient of a National Convention is but little better than a tub to the whale. We have shown that, constitutionally, this plan would require years of time to obtain a Convention; and, when obtained, its labors would probably end in nothing. What we want is some show of a compromise without delay, upon which the border slave States can stand their ground in the Union, and act as mediators with the seceded States. To this end let Mr. Lincoln, in his inaugural address, proclaim his adhesion to the Crittenden plan of adjustment; and next, let him call an extra session of Congress and urge this adjustment upon the two houses, suspending his distribution of the spoils and plunder until the two houses shall have acted, and our word for it there will be a settlement. If Mr. Lincoln would stand in the catalogue of our Presidents—in patriotism, sound practical wisdom and devotion to the Union—as second only to Washington, let him strike for a speedy and satisfactory compromise with the border slave States, and he may win this proud distinction.

## The Speech of the Emperor of the French on the Opening of the Chambers.

The Napoleon yesterday the speech of the Emperor, delivered on the formal opening of the session of the French Senate and legislative body. That it failed by its studied ambiguity in dissipating apprehension and springing confidence is clear from the circumstance that the three per cents fell one-half per cent immediately afterwards on the Paris Bourse. The news did not reach London till after business hours, but a similar effect was experienced there on the following morning.

The Emperor devoted the first part of his speech to internal affairs, and the latter part to his foreign policy. He said that in future a general exposition of the state of the empire, as also the more important diplomatic despatches, should be laid before the Legislature, by which it would be enabled to give a free and sincere expression of its opinions. This change, he observed, notwithstanding its importance, would not alter in any way the spirit of the constitution. He reviewed the principal differences between the institutions of France under Louis Philippe and the present dynasty—the result of which was of course favorable to the latter; after which he referred to the commercial treaty with England and the advantages arising therefrom, as well as the design he entertained of negotiating similar treaties with neighboring States. To realize these economical reforms he had renounced ninety millions of francs of annual receipts; yet the budget would show a balance of receipts and expenditure, without the imposition of fresh taxes or the contracting of a loan. In his review of foreign affairs he said that he had endeavored to prove, in his relations with other Powers, that France sincerely desires peace, and that, without renouncing a legitimate influence, she does not pretend to interfere anywhere where her interests are not at stake. In Italy he considers, alike with his allies, that the principle of non-intervention affords the best means of obviating danger. The provinces of Savoy and Nice are held "irrevocably united to France." In China French honor has been avenged side by side with the British. He says nothing about the withdrawal of the French forces from Syria, but mentions that they have gone, in virtue of a European convention, to protect Christians against a blind fanaticism. He augmented the garrison at Rome for the security of the Holy Father, and he despatched his fleet to Gaeta at the moment when it seemed the last refuge of the King of Naples; but he had withdrawn it after four months because it compelled him to deviate from his declared principle of neutrality and exposed him to false interpretations. He concluded with an assurance that there was no cause for apprehension. "My firm determination," he said, "is not to enter on any conflict where the cause of France is not based upon right and justice." He deprecated the folly of imaginary alarms, and while advocating a calm survey of the future, directed the attention of the people to the development of the germs of national prosperity.

So much was expected by Europe from the Emperor on this occasion, that a natural feeling of disappointment was experienced when the inaugural address was given to the world. There is a quaint proverb which says that "Fine words butter no parsnips;" and the imperial speech has fallen upon the popular mind as so many fine words, that mean little and commit him to nothing. He gives no explicit guarantee of peace, and speaks in that vague, general way which is considered anything but like a constitutional sovereign, or any other than Louis Napoleon, who, whatever he may decree nominally, has no intention of surrendering a particle of real power by a transfer of authority to the Senate or Corps Legislatif. The Emperor has not entered into sufficient explanation of either the past or future to allay the fears of Europe. Why is he augmenting his military and naval forces on a scale that surpasses the preparations which preceded the campaign in Lombardy if he really means peace, and why did he not account for these extensive preparations in his address? Europe judges by his actions as well as his words, and the two, it must in justice be said, are not always reconcilable.

A spirit of dissatisfaction and uncertainty pervades the speech, and there is a studied absence of all but the merest casual mention of any foreign Power. This unfriendly coolness, and the omission of any statement as to the future policy of the empire, may well inspire uneasiness. There is an evident mistrust of, and dissatisfaction with, not only his own constitution, but the state of trade, the principle of non-intervention, public opinion, and other nations. There is nothing, in fact, when we carefully peruse the speech, to show that Louis Napoleon does not mean war, and war we may therefore expect. Coming from any other man we should have accepted it as peaceful; but coming from him, we must read it in the same light as his assuring words uttered only a few weeks before the war with Austria.

A SUGGESTIVE INCIDENT.—Yesterday, at the City Hall, a very tall man made his way through the crowd which had assembled to greet Mr. Lincoln, and expressed a desire to measure lengths with the President elect. The result was a verdict in favor of Old Abe, whose head towers above the shoulders of ordinary humanity. This incident, like many others apparently absurd, has a degree of suggestiveness. After the 4th of March some thirty millions of people will be busily engaged in taking Lincoln's dimensions, trying him with the square of integrity, the rule of honesty, and sounding him with the plummet of patriotism. If it turns out that he is elevated mentally as far above the petty squabbles and selfish intrigues of the politicians as he is physically over the common run of men, all will be well. But if he falls short of the high standard he has set up—the character of Washington—the fate of Belshazzar will most certainly descend upon him.

MR. LINCOLN ON THE RIGHT PLATFORM.—During the reception of Mr. Lincoln in the Governor's Room in the City Hall yesterday, there was some difficulty experienced in placing him in a prominent position where he could be seen by all; but Old Abe selected a location for himself by taking his place in front of the portrait of Washington, saying that he would stand beside the old General. Now, all the speeches and conversations of Mr. Lincoln up to a very recent date, have indicated his determination to stand on the Chicago platform and nothing else, but the platform he selected to stand upon yesterday would intimate that he has changed his mind, and will administer the government from the platform of the Father of his Country.

THE CHEVALIER FORNEY AND THE WASHINGTON LOBBY.—We had supposed that the short commons of an empty Treasury had pretty well starved out the Washington lobby. But in this we have been egregiously mistaken. As pickpockets like the confusion of a street crowd, so are the lobby birds the most industrious when our political affairs are enveloped in the dust and smoke and noise and confusion of a great revolutionary crisis. Thus while the attention of all other parties, in and out of Congress, is absorbed in the momentous questions of Union or disunion, peace or war, the vultures of the Washington lobby are as busy as burglars in a bank. It seems, too, according to a letter on the subject from a Washington correspondent, that they have a new chief to conduct their operations, a thousand times better qualified for the position than that blundering fellow Matteson. This new man, we are apprised, is the Chevalier Forney, Clerk of the House of Representatives. His office, and the privileges and perquisites thereof, unquestionably give him all the desired facilities for pushing along any amount of lobby jobs, great and small. Nor is he the man, as it appears, to throw these facilities away. Mark the programme, as communicated to us from "a looker on in Verona," who seems to know all about it. Forney, we are thus assured, is the head of the lobby, and his office is the headquarters of the lobby. There the lobby jobbers shape out their plans of operation, and divide the labor and the spoils upon such jobs as the Chiriqui three hundred thousand dollar plum, Wendell's printing office, the Fisher claim, the Degroot job, and all other jobs affording a margin for spoils and plunder. But the worst is yet to come. Forney's headquarters in the Capitol, it further appears, supplies another great lobby desideratum—liquor. He keeps, we are told, a confidential lobby dranshop, where free whiskey is served out freely to those republican members who are too pious or too modest to be seen wetting their whiskies at any of the public oratory saloons in the basements of the Capitol. Read our correspondent's letter, and then answer, if Forney can gather such fat pickings from the Clerk's office of Congress, what will such a compiler of "free wool" statistics as Thurloe Weed be able to make of the drippings and skimmings, the candle ends and marrow bones, the bottles and the soap fat of the White House kitchen?

Verily, this revolutionary crisis seems to be turning out a rich harvest to the Washington lobby; and if such things occur in the green tree of a republican administration, what may we not expect in the dry? No wonder the Southern States are hurrying off into a Southern confederacy.

ANOTHER MODEL FOR OLD ABE.—Queen Victoria's speech on the opening of Parliament has naturally been looked forward to with interest in this country. The more than cordial reception which we gave to the Prince of Wales, and the complication in our political affairs, which threatens to affect so seriously the commercial interests of England, were topics which claimed some special reference in it. In the banalities of a royal speech we do not of course look for any very strong expression of feeling. The allusions made by her Majesty to this country prove, however, that the occasion was deemed one in which cold formalities might be laid aside. In expressing her heartfelt regret at the differences which have sprung up amongst us, and which are likely to lead to such grave results, the Queen adds that her interest in our wellbeing is increased by the warm reception we have given the Prince of Wales. She would be less than a mother if the fact were not so; for surely never did the son of any sovereign meet from a people upon whom he had no claim of loyalty or political sympathy a more royal or generous welcome. It was spontaneous; it was free from interested motives, and had not the slightest taint of that toadyism to rank which infects the European populations.

But if there were not this ground for the feeling expressed in her Majesty's speech, there are others which would well justify the use of the strongest terms of regret that she could employ. She and her advisers cannot but perceive that, from the violent measures to which the warlike programme of the incoming administration is about to commit us, there is certain to result to England a shock to her industrial and commercial interests from which it will take her years to recover, and which, in the meanwhile, may affect her seriously in a political sense. Of what account are the abstractions of the Exeter Hall philanthropists in the eyes of English statesmen compared with the commercial stagnation, the distress, the riots and the outrages that will ensue from the interruption of the cotton supply from this country? It would be fortunate for us if the party coming into power were as clear sighted and as practical in their views.

WHISKERS PROCLAIMED BY HONEST ABE LINCOLN.—The President elect, in pursuance of instructions from a young republican dame at Cleveland, Ohio, having turned out a pair of whiskers with which to enter upon the duties of the White House, all republicans expecting office will please look to their whiskers. The Empress of France, at an interesting epoch, disguised her imperial intentions in a hooped skirt, and hooped skirts, from her example, though not for the same reason, have become universal from Paris to the Sandwich Islands.

Louis Napoleon's moustache would probably have been as extensively imitated on this side the Atlantic had Mr. Buchanan adopted the fashion; but how are our young republicans to withstand the temptations of a hairy visage when Louis Napoleon, King Victor Emanuel, Prince Albert, Sr. and, to cap the climax, "Honest Abe Lincoln," proclaim it by example as the law of the land? Wide Awake, bring out your whiskers.

MR. LINCOLN GETTING LIGHT.—Ever since Mr. Lincoln began to give us some of the outpourings of his mind in all the little speeches he has been making on his route to Washington he has been saying some very curious things particularly in his addresses in the interior towns and villages. Since he got as far as Buffalo, however, his tone has been more sensible, and his expression of opinion more reserved. He speaks now of obtaining light upon the condition of the country, and endeavoring to steer his course upon the information he receives, so as to be "as nearly right as possible." He had an opportunity of learning something yesterday from a source to which we recommended him to apply, for he breakfasted with Mr. Moses H. Grinnell, in company with a large number of the leading merchants of the metropolis—merchants, we presume, of a very

dark republican complexion—but men nevertheless, who, in their business relations, must be thoroughly acquainted with the perilous condition of the country. Mr. Lincoln must have learned a good deal from them, and we will see by his course when he gets to Washington and assumes the reins of government, whether he has profited by the knowledge acquired in the great commercial metropolis of the country.

THE CONSPIRACY TO DESTROY THE UNION.—The Northern papers in the republican interest have published lately a great many articles to prove that during the last few years an extended conspiracy to break up the Union has been hatched by certain politicians in the South. This may be true; but if so, it is not half the truth. The great conspiracy to destroy this republic commenced nearly thirty years ago. It was set on foot by the Garrison, the Tappan, the Phillips, the Motte, and their abolition confederates in England and the United States. This foul and black-hearted plot culminated in the election of Lincoln, upon the Chicago platform, which is based upon the Garrisonian idea, artfully covered up so as to deceive the masses of Northern voters. The plot has succeeded, the Union has been broken up, and now it is for the conservatives of the republican party, the men who have been inveigled into the support of the black republican candidates, under false impressions as to the ruinous tendency of their doctrines, to come out at once from fellowship with Garrison, Phillips, Sumner & Co., and help in the work of saving the slave States which have not yet seceded. Otherwise they will all be out in a very short time, and the work of reconstruction will be postponed, if not rendered altogether impossible.

## THE REVOLUTION.

## IMPORTANT NEWS FROM WASHINGTON.

## Passage of the Tariff Bill in the Senate.

## A TWO YEARS TAX ON TEA AND COFFEE.

## Exciting Debate in the House on the Force and Naval Bills.

## Seven Steam Sloop-of-War to be Built.

## REPORTED ATTACK ON FORT SUMTER.

## The Proceedings of the Peace Convention.

## PROBABLE CALL FOR A NATIONAL CONVENTION.

## REPORTS RESPECTING FORT SUMTER.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20, 1861.  
There are fresh reports about taking Fort Sumter. A Colonel, by the name of Thos. D. Sumter, has volunteered to take it by the job, in spite of the Montgomery Congress.

General Scott to-day stated that he had intelligence from Charleston that an attack was to be made on Fort Sumter to-day. This is contrary to the understanding among the secession Senators here, and also that existing at Montgomery, where all the questions respecting the forts and public property have been referred by the several States to the Congress.

It is understood General Scott received this intelligence from Major Anderson, and that it has been corroborated by similar information from reliable parties at Charleston. The Carolinians will hardly attempt this after having referred matters to the Southern Confederacy. It is known, however, that South Carolina does not sue, but the action thus far taken by the confederacy. It is said here by prominent navy and army officers that Major Anderson can be easily reinforced, and some of them are willing to undertake the contract themselves. They also assert that the fort cannot be taken by Colons' Sumter, or any other colored.

Colonel Sumter was born in Pennsylvania, removed to South Carolina, and represented that State in Congress from 1840 to 1843.

In addition to the above, I learn to-day from a high Executive source in the government that there will not be any attack upon Fort Sumter before the 4th of March. He could not say what the South Carolinians would do after that.

It is proper to say that the most prominent Northern leaders, democrats as well as republicans, express entire indifference as to what they do.

## THE PEACE CONFERENCE.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20, 1861.  
The Peace Congress to-day laid the motion to apply the half hour to debate upon the table.

D. D. Field, of New York made a speech in favor of a Constitutional Convention. He said, in reply to a question, that his State desired no amendment to the constitution, but as the South did he was in favor of yielding them that much, because that was the only constitutional way to divide, if we could not live peaceably together.

Mr. Smith, of New York, made the speech of the day, carefully tracing the great question between the North and South as he went along in all its details. He did not close this afternoon, but will finish his speech to-morrow. He is strongly opposed to the majority report, and cannot see that the people of the North have committed any constitutional offence that should cause a demand to be made for their redress in the shape of concession or compromise.

Mr. Dodge, of New York, assumed the same position as that taken by Mr. Granger yesterday. He thought the North ought to concede something to the South.

Mr. White, of Pennsylvania, and Mr. Frelinghuysen, of New Jersey, also addressed the Convention, the latter supporting the majority report.

It is believed that the Congress will begin to vote on the various propositions on Saturday next, and from present appearances the majority proposition will be voted down, and the plan adopted of submitting to the several Legislatures of the States the propriety of calling a convention of the people to revise the constitution of the United States.

It will be remembered that the action of the Peace Convention was not to be submitted to Congress unless they agreed to recommend an amendment to the constitution. If the Convention cannot do this, then any recommendation that it makes will not require the sanction of Congress, but will go directly and promptly to the people for their ratification or rejection.

Every day makes it more apparent that the republicans in the Peace Congress do not intend to permit a vote to be taken for several days yet on any of the questions of adjustment. The debates of to-day clearly prove such determination. The radical republicans element occupied nearly the whole of to-day in factitious speeches. Field and Smith, of New York, and Tuck, of New Hampshire, made ultra speeches.

The friends of peace in the conference, who have all along hoped that matters would yet come right, begin to despair. Another day or so will determine matters. The Convention cannot hold together much longer unless there is a decided change.

## THE PROPOSED NATIONAL CONVENTION.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20, 1861.

It is as clear as the day that the North intends to test the question, in the most direct and positive manner, whether we have a government or not, and will not stop to consider or compromise until that question is settled. The resolution of Mr. Foster, of New York, offered in the House as an amendment to the report of the Committee of Feb. three, "that the

proper tribunal to which all existing disturbing questions should be referred for deliberate consideration and final settlement is a convention of delegates from the several States of the Union, to be called in the mode prescribed in the constitution," is the growing sentiment among the republicans, and in the Peace Congress to-day the same doctrine was advocated by Mr. Field, of New York. More than this, nearly every member of the Peace Congress from New England is in favor of a constitutional convention. It seems now to be a battle upon which a settlement of the whole question can be reached, and there is no doubt that Mr. Seward at the proper time will favor it, and Mr. Lincoln will sanction it in his inaugural.

## MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20, 1861.

A special despatch from here to New York states that the coupon bonds proposed to be issued by Mr. Sherman's bill can be printed for six thousand dollars instead of eighty-two thousand dollars, as estimated by the Secretary of the Treasury. This is true. The bonds can be printed and issued, without signatures to the coupons, for a very small sum; but there would be great danger of counterfeiting and loss to the Treasury. It is due to the government, if it issues coupon bonds, that they should be engraved, not printed, and that the coupons should be numbered and signed in the customary manner. Mr. Sherman's plan would be very loose and very hazardous.

MR. LINCOLN'S CABINET.

It has already been stated that Mr. Seward and Mr. Bates are the only gentlemen thus far selected by Mr. Lincoln for his Ministry; but I understand that other names are on a list of whitish brown paper which Old Abe carefully carries in his vest pocket, right hand side. These names are—Simon Cameron, Salmon P. Chase and Montgomery Blair. There are two vacancies. It is urged upon the President elect to take Charles Francis Adams as the representative from New England. Mr. Chase may not accept the place tendered him.

NEW CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICAN PARTY.

There are indications, here, everywhere, that a conservative republican party is springing up which will override and squelch out the party that carried the North last November. One or two New England Senators are in the movement.

THE SUPREME COURT TO-DAY TOOK UP THE CASE OF THE GOVERNOR OF KENTUCKY AGAINST THE GOVERNOR OF OHIO, the latter having refused to issue his warrant for the arrest and surrender of Sago, who was indicted in Kentucky for enticing a slave to escape from his owner, but escaped and took refuge in Ohio. The counsel are Representatives Stevenson and Humphrey Marshall for Kentucky, and Wolcott for Ohio. The argument to-day was confined mainly to the slavery question.

THE INFLUENCE OF MR. SEWARD.

Should Mr. Lincoln be guided by the counsels of Mr. Seward, even though there should be no adjustment by the Peace Congress, yet the border slave States would repose confidence in the action of the incoming administration. But should the President elect fall into the hands of the other branch of the party, the last hope of adjustment would be forever lost. The border slave States will, in the latter event, follow the lead of the cotton States, and the Union finally be dissolved. The destinies of the country are therefore in the hands of the leaders of the republican party.

REPLY OF THE FORCE BILL.

Should the House pass the Force bill, which is now under consideration, and which will be pressed to a vote to-morrow, it will have a very injurious effect upon the action of the Peace Conference. It will certainly precipitate action on the part of the border States. The bill was sent South yesterday to be used in several of the States to show that the incoming administration, backed up by the republican Congress, intend to coerce the South. The most moderate republicans here regret that such a bill was introduced at this time. It will surely retard a settlement.

THE NAVY BILL.

The passage by the House to-day of the Senate amendment to the Navy bill, in favor of seven screw war steamers, creates considerable excitement in secession circles to-night.

POSTAL AFFAIRS.

The mail contractors in the seceded States are continually asking whether they will be paid as heretofore, to which the Post Office Department responds affirmatively, stating that drafts will be issued to them on the postmasters, to be paid from the postal revenue collected within those States.

The Postmaster General has removed the route agent between Gratton and Parkersburg, Va., on the ground that he left his business without permission to engage in the secession movements in that State.

Several postmasters in Kentucky and Tennessee have been removed for a similar cause.

THE NATIONAL FLAG.